INTRODUCTION

I still recall the fear I experienced the very first time I stood in front of a group of high school biology students as a student teacher. Sure, I had been exposed to teaching and students in schools but only via short observational periods as education course requirements. Until my first day of student teaching as a college senior, I had never been in command of a class of students, I had never had to prepare a lesson that I would actually teach to real students, and I had never had to concern myself with disciplinary issues or other classroom management matters. My trepidation, therefore, was palpable.

Not long after I was hired as a first year high school biology teacher, sporadic education programs across the country began experimenting with an innovative, novel approach to teacher education that has since been known by several labels, including Professional Development Schools (Holmes Group, 1986), professional practice schools (Levine, 1988), clinical schools (Carnegie Corp., 1986), professional development centers (Clark, 1990), and partner schools (Goodlad, 1990) among others.

The Professional Development School (PDS) has been likened to the role of the teaching hospital in the clinical experience of medical students (Darling-Hammond, 1989; Goodlad, 1990). In a PDS setting, teaching interns are immersed in the practice and culture of teaching for an extended period of time (one semester to nine months). The clincher is that the PDS experience takes place early in the educational careers of pre-service teachers, long before the student teaching experience commences. Thus, not only do PDS students have the knowledge earlier in their educational careers necessary to determine whether or not teaching is the appropriate career for them, but they also seem much more poised and primed for a successful student teaching experience.

Although what takes place within each PDS setting differs, what is a common denominator is that there is collaboration between higher education institutions and local school districts. According to Cochran-Smith (1994), this collaboration creates "learning opportunities that are different from and richer than the opportunities either the school or the university can provide alone" (p. 149). Teitel (1992) compares the PDS experience with that of a traditional teacher education program and depicts the PDS experience as "more intense, more collaborative and more practitioner oriented" (p. 70). In a PDS setting, university pre-service teachers work side by side with actual classroom teachers all day, every day for at least a full semester planning and delivering instruction, designing curriculum, assessing student progress, managing classrooms, attending in-service functions, faculty meetings, and professional development opportunities, serving bus duty, lunch duty, and hall patrol, chaperoning field trips, tutoring before and after school and doing essentially everything that a licensed classroom teacher does under the watchful eyes of cooperating teachers and administrators. At the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga's PDS sites, university faculty deliver instruction (which is connected to PDS classroom experiences) to PDS students at each site and are available as consultants to school faculty in a variety of capacities.

The University of Tennessee began its Professional Development School initiative nine years ago. There are currently four PDS sites in operation: 21st Century Academy, Normal Park Elementary, Chattanooga School for the Liberal Arts, and Brainerd High School. PDS students spend five days a week for a full semester at one of the four sites. They have two different placements with two different teachers during the semester-long internship. UTC professors deliver instruction to each of the four sites so

interns never leave their field placements to take coursework on campus. Students participate in several classes, depending on their individual areas of licensure. PreK-4 licensure students receive instruction in Designing Instruction and Evaluation in the Elementary Classroom; Teaching Reading; Survey of Exceptional Learners; Child Development and Observation; and Families: Home, School, Community Partnerships. Middle grades licensure students receive instruction in Designing Instruction and Evaluation in the Elementary Classroom; Teaching of Reading in the Secondary School; Child Development and Observation; Middle Grades Organization, Curriculum and Instruction; Child Development and Observation; and Families: Home, School, and Community Partnerships. Secondary licensure students receive instruction in Designing Instruction and Evaluation in the Secondary Classroom; Survey of Exceptional Learners; Teaching of Reading in the Secondary School; Child Development and Observation; and Middle Grades Organization, Curriculum and Instruction. Exceptional education students receive instruction in Instructional Technology for the Elementary Exceptional Student; Teaching Reading; Survey of Exceptional Learners; Classroom Management in Special Education; and Child Development and Observation. The coursework is delivered in such a way as to insure the relevance of the practical field experience in relation to educational theoretical perspectives. Students are encouraged to reflect daily on their field experiences and draw from those experiences, making them the center of their learning.

At the PDS sites, students are selected to work with specific teachers at certain grade levels and in specific subject areas based on the subject they wish to eventually teach and the grade level at which they hope to teach. Because students have two

placements during the PDS tenure, they have exposure to at least two subject areas and/or grade levels.

Since the implementation of the Professional Development School program here at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, we have seen an evolution take place in the preparedness of education students for the student teaching experience. Students have repeatedly stressed the value of the PDS experience as preparation for student teaching. Unfortunately, many students (often non-traditional students) cannot participate in the Professional Development School at UTC because it requires day-long attendance for a full semester, therefore completion of the PDS program is not mandatory. Consequently, we have two groups of students who ultimately become student teachers at UTC, those who have gone through the PDS program and those who have not.

METHODOLOGY

Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of this study was to determine whether or not differences exist in perceived teacher preparedness between students participating in the Professional Development School prior to the student teaching experience and those who did not participate in the Professional Development School program. More specifically, I wished to compare and contrast PDS and non-PDS pre-service/student teachers' views at the end of their student teaching experiences in terms of their (a) perceptions of the knowledge and skills they perceived the Teacher Education Program at UTC helped them develop (b) perceptions of the educational opportunities provided them via the Teacher Education Program, and (c) perceptions of the strengths and weaknesses of the Teacher Education Program at UTC.

Survey Instrument

The survey used in this study was designed to generate attitudinal information from end-of-program pre-service teachers at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga concerning their perceived preparedness for teaching following completion of the education program and student teaching experience. The survey was also designed to allow students to evaluate the Teacher Education Program at UTC in terms of the educational knowledge and skills they perceived it offered them and the opportunities it provided them to enhance teaching-related skills.

Respondents were first asked to provide demographic information including degree program identification, licensure area identification, estimated date of program completion, and participation in Professional Development School.

The majority of the survey consisted of a scaled response mechanism (Likert scale) composed of a six-point rating scale in which the attitude of the respondent was measured on a continuum from strongly disagree to strongly agree. A middle or neutral category was omitted to deter “fence sitting” by respondents. Possible responses included strongly disagree, moderately disagree, disagree, agree, moderately agree, and strongly agree. Numerical values were assigned to responses as follows: strongly disagree (1), moderately disagree (2), disagree (3), agree (4), moderately agree (5) and strongly agree 6).

The survey was divided into three sections. The first asked respondents to evaluate the Teacher Education Program at UTC in terms of the knowledge and skills they perceived the program helped them develop. The second section asked participants to evaluate educational opportunities offered via the UTC Teacher Education Program

prior to the student teaching experience, and the third section allowed the respondents to identify three strengths of the Teacher Education program and three changes they would make to the program if given the opportunity.

Procedure

The survey was administered at the final required meeting for student teachers prior to graduation; therefore, ninety-three out of ninety-three student teachers participated in the study (100% participation). Upon collection of the surveys, tabulation of data began with an itemization of demographic information followed by the identification of PDS and non-PDS participants. The responses of the respondents of each of the two groups (PDS and non-PDS) were then tabulated for each question. Responses for the two groups were then compared.

Respondents

Of the ninety-three participants, fifty-five satisfactorily complete the Professional Development School program at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, while thirty-eight did not participate in the Professional Development School. Seventy- two of the ninety-three participants were seeking Bachelor of Science degrees, nineteen were seeking Master of Education degrees, and two were Bachelor of Music Education students. Licensure areas representative of the respondents were as follows: PreK-4: forty-one, Exceptional Learning: twelve, Middle Grades: eleven, Social Science (7-12): seven, Natural Science (7-12): seven, Art (K-12): one, English (7-12): seven, Math and Natural Science (7-12): one, Math (7-12): three, Exercise Science (K-12): one, and Music (K-12, vocal): two. Eighty-nine of the participants had completed their programs of study

at the time the survey was administered and were expected to graduate the following week. The other four were planning to graduate the following semester.

RESULTS

Tabulation of Responses

Table 1 provides the number of actual responses for each attitudinal category per question for students who took part in the PDS program.

Table 1

PDS Participant Actual Responses

Question	strongly disagree	moderately disagree	disagree	agree	moderately agree	strongly agree	did not answer	Total
1a	1	0	1	23	19	10	1	55
1b	0	2	2	15	22	14	0	55
1c	1	0	3	24	18	9	0	55
1d	0	2	4	17	14	17	1	55
1e	0	1	3	13	22	15	1	55
1f	1	0	3	12	22	17	0	55
1g	1	0	5	18	14	17	0	55
1h	1	2	0	15	20	17	0	55
1i	0	5	9	13	16	12	0	55
1j	1	2	8	10	22	12	0	55
1k	1	0	4	14	21	15	0	55
1l	2	0	5	14	23	11	0	55
1m	2	0	4	19	15	15	0	55
2a	1	1	1	17	17	18	0	55
2b	2	1	2	7	11	31	1	55
2c	1	0	5	15	20	12	2	55
2d	3	0	4	16	15	15	2	55
2e	1	0	3	7	17	25	2	55
2f	1	3	2	9	10	28	2	55
2g	1	0	6	7	12	27	2	55
2h	1	3	1	18	10	20	2	55
2i	1	2	1	19	10	20	2	55
SUM	23	24	76	322	370	377	18	1210

Table 2 provides the number of actual responses for each attitudinal category per question for students who did not take part in the PDS program.

Table 2

Non-PDS Participant Percentage Response

Question	strongly disagree %	moderately disagree %	disagree %	agree %	moderately agree %	strongly agree %	did not answer %
1a	5.26%	0.00%	2.63%	28.95%	42.11%	21.05%	0.00%
1b	2.63%	0.00%	0.00%	26.32%	50.00%	18.42%	2.63%
1c	0.00%	7.89%	2.63%	34.21%	36.84%	15.79%	2.63%
1d	2.63%	2.63%	7.89%	31.58%	31.58%	21.05%	2.63%
1e	2.63%	0.00%	5.26%	28.95%	39.47%	21.05%	2.63%
1f	2.63%	2.63%	5.26%	21.05%	36.84%	28.95%	2.63%
1g	2.63%	2.63%	5.26%	23.68%	36.84%	26.32%	2.63%
1h	0.00%	5.26%	0.00%	13.16%	34.21%	42.11%	5.26%
1i	5.26%	2.63%	7.89%	18.42%	36.84%	23.68%	5.26%
1j	0.00%	5.26%	5.26%	23.68%	26.32%	31.58%	7.89%
1k	2.63%	0.00%	5.26%	28.95%	28.95%	28.95%	5.26%
1l	0.00%	2.63%	13.16%	31.58%	21.05%	26.32%	5.26%
1m	0.00%	5.26%	13.16%	21.05%	28.95%	26.32%	5.26%
2a	0.00%	7.89%	2.63%	39.47%	31.58%	10.53%	7.89%
2b	10.53%	0.00%	7.89%	31.58%	7.89%	7.89%	10.53%
2c	2.63%	5.26%	2.63%	15.79%	47.37%	15.79%	10.53%
2d	0.00%	5.26%	0.00%	13.16%	39.47%	31.58%	10.53%
2e	0.00%	5.26%	0.00%	7.89%	42.11%	34.21%	10.53%
2f	5.26%	5.26%	2.63%	10.53%	36.84%	26.32%	10.53%
2g	2.63%	5.26%	7.89%	15.79%	26.32%	31.58%	10.53%
2h	5.26%	2.63%	13.16%	15.79%	26.32%	26.32%	10.53%
2i	2.63%	2.63%	15.79%	21.05%	31.58%	15.79%	10.53%

Table 3 provides a tabulation of valued responses for each question according to the six-point numerical scale previously mentioned, a total numerical score for each question, and a mean and standard deviation for each question for PDS participants. Table 4 provides the same data as Table 3 for non-PDS participants.

Table 3

PDS Participant Valued Responses, Means, Standard Deviations

Question	SD (1)	MD (2)	D (3)	A (4)	MA (5)	SA (6)	DNA (0)	Total	Mean	STD. DEV
1a	1	0	3	92	95	60	0	251	4.56	9.67
1b	0	4	6	60	110	84	0	264	4.80	8.95
1c	1	0	9	96	90	54	0	250	4.55	9.65
1d	0	4	12	68	70	102	0	256	4.65	7.78
1e	0	2	9	52	110	90	0	263	4.78	8.73
1f	1	0	9	48	110	102	0	270	4.91	9.08
1g	1	0	15	72	70	102	0	260	4.73	8.19
1h	1	4	0	60	100	102	0	267	4.85	9.01
1i	0	10	27	52	80	72	0	241	4.38	6.36
1j	1	4	24	40	110	72	0	251	4.56	7.80
1k	1	0	12	56	105	90	0	264	4.80	8.63
1l	2	0	15	56	115	66	0	254	4.62	8.59
1m	2	0	12	76	75	90	0	255	4.64	8.15
2a	1	2	3	68	85	108	0	267	4.85	8.88
2b	2	2	6	28	55	186	0	279	5.07	10.87
2c	1	0	15	60	100	72	0	248	4.51	7.82
2d	3	0	12	64	75	90	0	244	4.44	7.10
2e	1	0	9	28	85	150	0	273	4.96	9.53
2f	1	6	6	36	50	168	0	267	4.85	9.58
2g	1	0	18	28	60	162	0	269	4.89	9.41
2h	1	6	3	72	50	120	0	252	4.58	8.23
2i	1	4	3	76	50	120	0	254	4.62	8.55

Note: strongly disagree; MD = moderately disagree; D = disagree; MA = moderately agree; SA = strongly agree; DNA = did not answer

Table 4

Non-PDS Participant Valued Responses, Means, Standard Deviations

Question	SD (1)	MD (2)	D (3)	A (4)	MA (5)	SA (6)	DNA (0)	Total	Mean	STD. DEV
1a	2	0	3	44	80	48	0	177	4.66	6.32
1b	1	0	0	40	95	42	0	178	4.68	7.14
1c	0	6	3	52	70	36	0	167	4.39	5.86
1d	1	2	9	48	60	48	0	168	4.42	5.13
1e	1	0	6	44	75	48	0	173	4.55	5.91
1f	1	2	6	32	70	66	0	177	4.66	5.50
1g	1	2	6	36	70	66	0	181	4.76	5.44
1h	0	4	0	20	65	96	0	185	4.87	6.48
1i	2	2	9	28	70	63	0	174	4.58	4.79
1j	0	4	6	36	50	72	0	168	4.42	4.76
1k	1	0	6	44	55	66	0	172	4.53	5.26
1l	0	2	15	48	40	60	0	165	4.34	4.69
1m	0	4	15	32	55	60	0	166	4.37	4.31
2a	0	6	3	60	60	24	0	153	4.03	5.74
2b	4	0	9	48	35	42	0	168	4.42	3.82
2c	1	4	3	24	90	36	0	158	4.16	5.94
2d	0	4	0	20	60	72	0	156	4.11	5.88
2e	0	4	0	12	80	78	0	174	4.58	6.43
2f	2	4	3	16	70	60	0	155	4.08	4.86
2g	1	4	9	24	50	72	0	160	4.21	4.16
2h	2	2	15	24	50	60	0	153	4.03	3.55
2i	1	2	18	32	60	36	0	149	3.92	3.91

Note: SD = strongly disagree; MD = moderately disagree; D = disagree; MA = moderately agree; SA = strongly agree; DNA = did not answer.

Summary of Research Questions

The first section (consisting of questions I a to I m) asks students to respond in the following manner: *The Teacher Education Program at UTC has helped me develop the knowledge and skills to…*

Question I a: Understand the central concepts and process of inquiry of the subject matter I teach. Of PDS participants, 18.18% strongly agreed, 34.55% moderately agreed, 41.82 % agreed, 1.82% disagreed, 0.00% moderately disagreed, and 1.82 % strongly disagreed with this statement (1.82 % did not answer this question). Of non-PDS participants, 21.05% strongly agreed, 42.11% moderately agreed, 28.95% agreed, 2.63% disagreed, 0.00% moderately disagreed, and 2.63 % strongly disagreed (2.63 % did not answer this question).

Question I b: Create learning experiences that make subject matter meaningful to students. Of PDS participants, 25.45% strongly agreed, 40.00% moderately agreed, 27.27% agreed, 3.64% disagreed, 3.64% moderately disagreed, and 0.00% strongly disagreed. Of non-PDS participants, 18.42% strongly agreed, 50.0% moderately agreed, 26.32% agreed, 0.00% disagreed, 0.00% moderately disagreed, and 2.63% strongly disagreed (2.63% did not answer this question). Of non-PDS participants, 25.45% strongly agreed, 40.00% moderately agreed, 27.27% agreed, 3.64% disagreed, 3.64% moderately disagreed, and 0.00% strongly disagreed.

Question 1 c: Use alternative theoretical perspectives and research to guide instructional decision making and reflection on practice. Of PDS participants,15.79% strongly agreed, 36.84% moderately agreed, 34.21% agreed, 2.63% disagreed, 7.89% moderately disagreed, and 0.00% strongly disagreed (2.63% did not answer this

question). Of non-PDS participants, 16.36% strongly agreed, 32.73% moderately agreed, 43.64% agreed, 5.45% disagreed, 0.00% moderately disagreed, and 1.82% strongly disagreed.

Question I d: Use knowledge about individual differences to plan, deliver, and analyze instruction. Of PDS participants,30.91% strongly agreed, 25.45% moderately agreed, 30.91% agreed, 7.27% disagreed, 1.82% moderately disagreed, and 0.00% strongly disagreed (1.82% did not answer this question). Of non-PDS participants, 21.05% strongly agreed, 31.58% moderately agreed, 31.58% agreed, 7.89% disagreed, 2.63% moderately disagreed, and 2.63% strongly disagreed (2.63% did not answer this question).

Question I e: Plan meaningful learning experiences that promote student achievement and engagement in learning. Of PDS participants, 27.27% strongly agreed, 40.00% moderately agreed, 23.64% agreed, 5.45% disagreed, 1.82% moderately disagreed and 0.00% strongly disagreed (1.82% did not answer this question). Of non-PDS participants, 21.05% strongly agreed, 39.47% moderately agreed, 28.95% agreed, 5.26% disagreed, 0.00% moderately disagreed, and 2.63% strongly disagreed (2.63% did not answer this question).

Question I f: Use a variety of instructional strategies to promote student achievement and engagement in learning. Of PDS participants, 30.91% strongly agreed, 20.00% moderately agreed, 21.82% agreed, 5.45% disagreed, 0.00% moderately disagreed, and 1.82% strongly disagreed. Of non-PDS participants, 28.95% strongly agreed, 36.84% moderately agreed, 21.05% agreed, 5.26% disagreed, 2.63% moderately disagreed, and 2.63% strongly disagreed (2.63% did not answer this question).

Question I g: Use a variety of formal and informal assessments to evaluate classroom learning and teaching. Of PDS participants, 30.91% strongly agreed, 24.45% moderately agreed, 32.73% agreed, 9.09% disagreed, 0.00% moderately disagreed, and 1.82 % strongly disagreed. Of non-PDS participants, 26.32% strongly agreed, 36.84% moderately agreed, 23,68% agreed, 5.26% disagreed, 2.63% moderately disagreed, and 2.63% strongly disagreed (2.63% did not answer this question).

Question I h: Create and maintain a safe and productive learning environment. Of PDS participants, 30.91% strongly agreed, 36.36% moderately agreed, 27.27% agreed, 0.00% disagreed, 3.64%moderately disagreed, and 1.82% strongly disagreed. Of non-PDS participants, 42.11% strongly agreed, 34.21% moderately agreed, 13.16% agreed, 0.00% disagreed, 5.26% moderately disagreed, and 0.00% strongly disagreed (5.26% did not answer this question).

Question I i: Use technology in the planning, delivery, and analysis of learning and instruction. Of PDS participants, 21.82% strongly agreed, 29.09% moderately agreed, 23.64% agreed, 16.36% disagreed, 9.09% moderately disagreed, and 0.00% strongly disagreed. Of non-PDS participants, 23.58% strongly agreed, 36.84% moderately agreed, 18.42% agreed, 7.89% disagreed, 2.63% moderately disagreed, and 0.00% strongly disagreed (5.26% did not answer this question).

Question I j: Support and expand student literacy skills. Of PDS participants, 21.82% strongly agreed, 40.00% moderately agreed, 18.18% agreed, 14.55% disagreed, 3.64% moderately disagreed, and 1.82% strongly disagreed. Of non-PDS participants, 31.58% strongly agreed, 26.32% moderately agreed, 23.68% agreed, 5.26% disagreed,

5.26% moderately disagreed, and 0.00% strongly disagreed (7.89% did not answer this question).

Question I k: Model effective communication. Of PDS participants, 27.27% strongly agreed, 38.18% moderately agreed, 24.45% agreed, 7.27% disagreed, 0.00% moderately disagreed, and 1.82% strongly disagreed. Of non-PDS participants, 28.95% strongly agreed, 28.95% moderately agreed, 28.95% agreed, 5.36% disagreed, 0.00% moderately disagreed, and 2.63% strongly disagreed (5.26% did not answer this question).

Question I l: Foster relationships with the home, school, and community to support student learning and well-being. Of PDS participants, 20.00% strongly agreed, 41.82% moderately agreed, 24.45% agreed, 9.09% disagreed, 0.00% moderately disagreed, 3.64% strongly disagreed. Of non-PDS participants, 26.32% strongly agreed, 21.05% moderately agreed, 31.58% agreed, 13.16% disagreed, 2.63% moderately disagreed, and 0.00% strongly disagreed (5.26% did not answer this question).

Question I m: Display beliefs, values, and behaviors that guide the ethical dimensions of professional practice. Of PDS participants, 27.27% strongly agreed, 27.27% moderately agreed, 34.55% agreed, 7.27% disagreed, 0.0.0% moderately disagreed, and 3.64% strongly disagreed. Of non-PDS participants, 26.32% strongly agreed, 28.95% moderately agreed, 21.05% agreed, 13.16% disagreed, 5.26 % moderately disagreed, and 0.00% strongly disagreed (5.26% did not answer this question).

The second section (questions II a to II i) requires students to respond in the following manner: *The Teacher Education Program at UTC (PREVIOUS TO THE STUDENT TEACHING EXPERIENCE) provided me the opportunity to…*

Question II a: Engage in a variety of learning experiences. Of PDS participants, 32.73% strongly agreed, 30.91% moderately agreed, 30.91% agreed, 1.82% disagreed, 1.82% moderately disagreed, and 1.82% strongly disagreed. Of non-PDS participants, 10.53% strongly agreed, 31.58% moderately agreed, 39.47% agreed, 2.63% disagreed, 7.89% moderately disagreed, and 0.00% strongly disagreed (7.89% did not answer this question).

Question II b: Work in an actual school setting with practicing teachers and their students for an extended period of time (every day, for weeks). Of PDS participants, 56.36% strongly agreed, 20.00% moderately agreed, 12.73% agreed, 3.64% disagreed, 1.82% moderately disagreed, and 3.64% strongly disagreed (1.82% did not answer this question). Of non-PDS participants, 7.89% strongly agreed, 7.89% moderately agreed, 31.58% agreed, 7.89% disagreed, 0.00% moderately disagreed, and 10.53% strongly disagreed (10.53% did not answer this question).

Question II c: Learn about issues of exceptionality and cultural diversity as they relate to learning and teaching. Of PDS participants, 21.82% strongly agreed, 36.36% moderately agreed, 27.27% agreed, 9.09% disagreed, 0.00% moderately disagreed, and 1.82% strongly disagreed (3.64% did not answer this question). Of non-PDS participants, 15.79% strongly agreed, 47.37% moderately agreed, 15.79% agreed, 2.63% disagreed, 5.26% moderately disagreed, and 2.63% strongly disagreed (10.53% did not answer this question).

Question II d: Think critically and self-reflect. Of PDS participants, 27.27% strongly agreed, 27.27% moderately agreed, 29.09% agreed, 7.27% disagreed, 0.00% moderately disagreed, and 5.45% strongly disagreed (3.64% did not answer this question). Of no-PDS participants, 31.58% strongly agreed, 39.47% moderately agreed, 13.16% agreed, 0.00% disagreed, 5.26% moderately disagreed, and 0.00% strongly disagreed (10.53% did not answer this question).

Question II e: Make an educated decision about whether or not the teaching profession is the one I want to pursue. Of PDS participants, 45.45% strongly agreed, 30.91% moderately agreed, 12.73% agreed, 5.45% disagreed, 0.00% moderately disagreed, and 1.82% strongly disagreed (3.64% did not answer this question). Of non-PDS participants, 34.21% strongly agreed, 42.11% moderately agreed, 7.89% agreed, 0.00% disagreed, 5.26% moderately disagreed, and 5,26% strongly disagreed (10.53% did not answer this question).

Question II f: Interact with teachers and students in an urban school setting. Of PDS participants, 50.91% strongly agreed, 18.18% moderately agreed, 16.36% agreed, 3.64% disagreed, 5.45% moderately disagreed, and 1.82% strongly disagreed (3.64% did not answer this question). Of non-PDS participants, 26.32% strongly agreed, 36.84% moderately agreed, 10.53% agreed, 2.63% disagreed, 5.26% moderately disagreed, and 5.26% strongly disagreed (10.53% did not answer this question).

Question II g: Observe the classroom management skills of a practicing teacher. Of PDS participants, 49.09% strongly agreed, 21.82% moderately agreed, 12.73% agreed, 10.91% disagreed, 0.00% moderately disagreed, and 1.82% strongly disagreed (3.64% did not answer this question). Of non-PDS participants, 31.58% strongly agreed,

26.32% moderately agreed, 15.79% agreed, 7.89% disagreed, 5.26% moderately disagreed, and 2.63% strongly disagreed (10.53% did not answer this question).

Question II h: Develop confidence in myself as a teacher. Of PDS participants, 36.36% strongly agreed, 18.18% moderately agreed, 32.73% agreed, 1.82% disagreed, 5.45% moderately disagreed, and 1.82%strongly disagreed (3.64% did not answer this question). Of non-PDS participants, 26.32% strongly agreed, 26.32% moderately agreed, 15.79% agreed, 13.16% disagreed, 2.63% moderately disagreed, and 5.26% strongly disagreed (10.53% did not answer this question).

Question II i: Try out the knowledge I accrued in the Teacher Education Program by allowing me to teach in various settings. Of PDS participants, 36.36% strongly agreed, 18.18% moderately agreed, 34.55% agreed, 1.82% disagreed, 3.64% moderately disagreed, and 1.82% strongly disagreed (3.64% did not answer this question). Of non-PDS participants, 15.79% strongly agreed, 31.56% moderately agreed, 21.05% agreed, 15.79% disagreed, 2.63% moderately disagreed, and 2.63% strongly disagreed (10.53% did not answer this question).

Summary of Student Responses to Open-Ended Questions

Students were asked to list the three greatest strengths of the Teacher Education Program at UTC. In analyzing this section of the survey, a color-coded classification system was used to organize the responses. Responses were grouped according to participation in the PDS program and then further subdivided. Color-coded analysis revealed numerous thematic responses that were repeated by several respondents. A list of the revealed thematic responses (strengths of Teacher Education Program) for the PDS

group of students follows along with an account of the number of students who mentioned the same theme:

1. Experiences in an actual classroom setting with practicing teachers and students (41).
2. PDS (28).
3. Helpful faculty/staff (23).
4. Classes that adequately prepare for teaching (4).
5. Student teaching (4).
6. Opportunities for self-reflection (3).
7. Meaningful learning experiences (1).
8. Development of teacher confidence (1).
9. Content-area classes (1).

Non-PDS student responses were also grouped according to theme and number and are as follows:

1. Helpful faculty/staff (29).
2. Classes that adequately prepare for teaching (21).
3. Experiences in an actual classroom setting with practicing teachers and students (9).
4. Opportunities for self-reflection (6).
5. Student-teaching (4).
6. TEP sets high goals (2).
7. Structure of the program (1).
8. Portfolio requirement (1).

Students were also asked to list three things they would change about the Teacher Education Program at UTC. PDS group themed responses and number are as follows:

1. Reduce portfolio length (15).
2. Better advisement (10).
3. Encourage students to take Praxis exams earlier in program (1).
4. More time in classrooms (6).
5. More Praxis II preparation (5).
6. Reduce length of meetings (5).
7. Class on classroom management (5).
8. Better communication between faculty and students (5).
9. More consistency between Professor-in-Residence requirements (4).
10. Reduce number of meetings (3).
11. Provide interview procedures (2).
12. Many classes are repetitive (2).
13. More information and help in graduation planning (1).
14. Stronger literacy classes (1).

Non-PDS student themed responses to changes they would make in the Teacher Education Program are as follows:

1. Less paperwork (9).
2. More time in actual school classrooms (6).
3. Class on classroom management (5).
4. Reduce length of meetings (4).
5. Reduce portfolio length (3).

6. Encourage students to take Praxis exam earlier in program (3).
7. Require everyone to participate in a PDS experience (3).
8. Stronger literacy classes (3).
9. Provide more resources for student teachers (1).
10. Greater emphasis on assessment (1).
11. Class on school law (1).

Data Analysis

Statistical analysis was performed on sections one and two of the survey instrument. A two-tailed t test was chosen to determine whether or not significant differences existed between the responses of the two groups (PDS and non-PDS participants) for each question. No significant differences ($p < .05$) were found for any of the questions. An alpha level of .05 was used for all statistical tests.

DISCUSSION

Although statistical analysis did not reveal significant differences between responses from PDS and non-PDS participants, it is worthwhile to examine larger percentage differences to questions taken from section two of the survey. It is the section that specifically asks students to answer based solely on their experiences prior to their student teaching practice. Previously to the student teaching experience, non-PDS students have had sporadic experience in a school setting with practicing teachers while PDS students have had a full semester of experience in a public urban school setting working with practicing teachers and students. It is not surprising therefore, that students who took part in the Professional Development Program at UTC responded more positively (strongly agree) to every question except one (question II d that refers to

critical thinking and self-reflection) than their non-PDS counterparts did. For example, 32.73% of PDS participants responded highly favorably (strongly agree) to the question pertaining to engaging in a variety of learning experiences, while only 10.53% of non-PDS participants marked strongly agree. Even more remarkable is the percentage difference between PDS and non-PDS groups for question II b regarding the amount of time actually spent working in a school setting with practicing teachers and their students. 56.36% of PDS students responded highly favorable (strongly agree) while only 7.89% of non-PDS students strongly agreed. That finding is not surprising since PDS students spend far more time in actual classrooms with practicing teachers than do their non-PDS counterparts. Question II c (dealing with issues of exceptionality and cultural diversity in relation to teaching and learning) also shows a greater highly favorable response among PDS students than non-PDS students. Interestingly, question II d (critical thinking and self-reflection) resulted in a greater favorable response from non-PDS students (31.58%) than PDS students (27.27%). A greater percentage of PDS students (45.45%) also reported that they strongly agreed that their pre-student teaching experience aided them in making an educated decision about whether or not teaching the profession right for them while 34.21% of non-PDS students reported the same attitude. The trend continues with question II f (interaction with teachers and students in an urban school setting). 50.91% of PDS students strongly agreed, while 26.32% of non-PDS students strongly agreed. This is not surprising since every PDS sight at UTC is located in an urban school setting, and therefore all PDS students spend extended periods of time in urban schools. 49.09% of PDS students reported that they strongly agreed that they had been provided opportunities to observe the classroom management skills of a practicing teacher prior to

student teaching while 31.58% of non-PDS students strongly agreed. Of PDS students, 36.36% strongly agreed that prior to their student teaching experiences, they developed confidence in themselves as teachers (question II h); 26.32% of non-PDS students felt the same. And finally, 36.36% of PDS students strongly believed that they were allowed the opportunity to try out their teaching knowledge by teaching in a variety of settings prior to the student teaching experience compared to only 15.79% of non-PDS students.

Regarding the responses to section three of the survey, several interesting themes emerged both within and across groups. Within the PDS participant group in the category of strengths of the program, the majority of responses indicated the value perceived by these students of actual experiences working in classroom settings with practicing teachers and students (41), while twenty-eight students stressed the value of the PDS experience. Altogether sixty-nine responses indicated that field experience/PDS was one of the greatest strengths of the Teacher Education Program at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. Helpful faculty/staff was the second most stressed strength of the program according to PDS student participants. Possible changes that could be made to the program according to PDS students were diverse. The most mentioned theme within the PDS group for changes was the reduction of the folio length requirement (15) better advising (10).

Within the non-PDS participant group in the category of strengths of the program, the majority of responses indicated the value perceived by these students of helpful faculty/staff (29) and classes that helped prepare for teaching (21). Interestingly, 9 non-PDS students indicated that they would like to see PDS become a requirement of all

students and/or require more time in an actual classroom setting with practicing teachers and students when asked what changes they would like to make.

IMPLICATIONS

The implications for the education of pre-service teachers are clear. Participation in a Professional Development School program prior to student teaching increases the likelihood of being exposed to issues of exceptionality and diversity in relation to teaching and learning, of engaging in a wide variety of learning experiences, of interaction with teachers and students in an urban school setting, of observing the classroom management skills of practicing teachers prior to the student teaching experience, and of developing confidence in one's teaching abilities. Overall, the results of this study indicate that participation in a PDS program makes for a better prepared student teacher and a more successful student teaching experience.

The participants in this study corroborated Goodlad's study (1990) that found teachers believe their practical teacher training experiences were the most significant and commanding component in their professional preparation. Therefore, involvement in a Professional Development School sets the stage for a fervent initiation into the teaching profession.

FURTHER RESEARCH QUESTIONS

As this survey is re-administered and more data is gathered other studies beg to be undertaken. Some other research questions include: What are the reflections of teachers on their pre-service PDS experiences a year or more after being hired? What are the perceptions of administrators on performances of PDS participant teachers versus non-PDS participant teachers? What are the initial administrative interview impressions of

PDS versus non-PDS teacher education graduates? What are the long-term teacher retention rates of PDS versus non-PDS participants? The Professional Development School is relatively young and long-term studies are just beginning to appear in the literature, therefore these and many other questions remain to be answered.

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